



Emotional Regulation

Your *Emotional Regulation* refers to your ability to effectively deal with or respond to an emotional experience. We are more likely to struggle with regulating of what we often consider difficult emotions (e.g., anger, sadness) than positive emotions (e.g., joy). Learn how to improve your emotional regulation by using this worksheet.

1. **Identify what happened.** What led to this emotion? What happened just before you experienced this emotion? Was it a memory? Who did you talk to?
2. **What do you think was behind it?** How did you interpret the situation? What did it mean to you?
3. **How did this situation make you feel emotionally and physically?** Consider your physical and emotional response. What did you feel initially? What was your secondary emotion? How did your body respond? What was happening in your body and mind? What thoughts were you aware of?
4. **What did you want to do as a result of what you felt?** In other words, what is your urge? Consider your urge. Did you want to hurt yourself? Or did you want to hurt the person who you thought was responsible for your feelings? Sometimes urges can be very strong – to hurt someone, to break an object, to quit a job, to push someone, or to drink.
5. **What were the immediate consequences?** What hurtful things did you do and say at the time? Did you actually end up hurting yourself as well as others? Did you react impulsively and did this lead to negative consequences? What did you do?
6. **What were the long-term consequences?** How did your emotions and actions affect you later? Maybe initially it felt good and there was a real sense of relief. When we react rashly we often deal with negative consequences of our behaviour.
7. **How would you react in this situation?** Would you like to remain calm, take time out, de-stress, self-soothe?
8. **What do you need to do?** What do you need to adjust in your behaviour and thinking to improve your emotional regulation? What new habits do you need to create to help yourself to react differently to situations that arise in the future? (e.g., mindfulness, positive self-talk)